



Science



Literacy

THROW & GROW

Grade Level

2-5

Length of Lesson

45 minutes

Objective

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to explain the importance of pollinators.

Materials Needed

- Air dry clay
- Compost
- Wildflower seeds (native to your area)
- Small spray bottle with water

Standards

Common Core

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.7; SL.4.1

NGSS

2-LS2-1; 3-LS1-1; 3-LS3; 3-LS4; 5-LS2-1

Lesson Summary

This lesson is a fun, hands-on activity designed to teach students more about the importance of pollinators. Students will also learn about seed germination and plant growth as you watch your flowers grow!

Suggested Sequence of Events:

1. Read "[Up in the Garden and Down in the Dirt](#)" by Kate Messner to snag student interest!
2. Read through the IL AITC Pollinator Ag Mag to learn about pollination. Interactive online versions can be found on our website.
3. Complete the activity following the procedures:
 - Have each student pull off a piece of clay and spread it out to be large enough to pour the compost on it.
 - Have them pour a pinch of compost on the clay and then pour the seeds on top of it.
 - Then, have students spray a small amount of water (one or two sprays) on their seeds.
 - Allow each student to fold together and knead the mixture until the mixture is thoroughly mixed together.
 - Have them roll it into a ball and bring it out to dry in the sun.
 - Now it is time to "throw and grow." Have them throw their seeds into their yard and wait for them to grow.
5. Whole class discussion and reflection of activity.

TEACHER RESOURCES

Background Information:

Spring is the best time to toss your throw and grows into your yard or an approved location at your school. Try to time it before a heavy rainfall in order to help the seeds germinate.

The clay helps hold the soil and seeds together. Once thrown, the clay will hold the compost and seeds together so the seeds have a nutritious home to germinate. Over time, the seeds will root into the ground and weather conditions will break down the clay.

Extension Ideas:

- Read "[Our School Garden](#)" by Rick Swann and talk about the importance of flower gardens. Talk with your principal and maintenance staff and see if there's an approved location on the school grounds where you can grow a pollinator garden.
 - Have students measure, design, and build the garden before you complete this activity.
 - If there is no approved location, have students 'throw' their "Throw & Grows" into a flower pot and set the pots by your classroom windows.
- Have students draw or take pictures of their observations on their plant growth.
- Have students measure the growth of their plants and record the data on a graph.
- Have students research a native Illinois flower and its usual pollinators.
 - Students can write a paper about their findings.
- Have students think more deeply about the role each material played in their throw and go; What is compost used for? What would happen if we didn't water it? How does a seed become a plant?
- Learn about the difference of "soil" vs. "dirt."
- Learn about different pollinators!
 - Invite a beekeeper in to talk about bees.
 - Get involved and learn about the [Illinois Monarch Project](https://www.ilfb.org/resources/ifb-in-action/illinois-monarch-project-provides-resources/). Available at <https://www.ilfb.org/resources/ifb-in-action/illinois-monarch-project-provides-resources/>
 - Watch this [video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_QYvaiozsFc) from the Illinois Farm Bureau all about pollinator habitats. Available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_QYvaiozsFc
- Have students write a paragraph about the importance of pollinators.
- Go to agintheclassroom.org to contact your County Literacy Coordinator for free classroom sets of our Ag Mags!